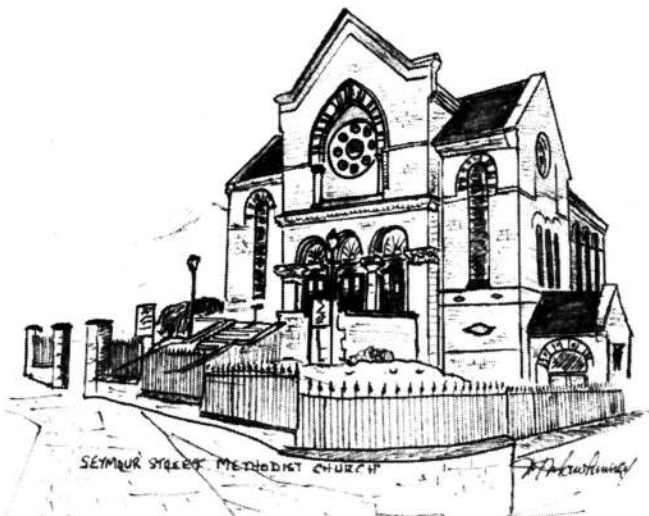


ROUND THE CHURCHES

38: Seymour Street Methodist Church

Drawing: Mervyn Mawhinney

Text: George Orr



Seymour Street Methodist Church, Lisburn, replaced an earlier church in Market Street which had been erected about 1774 and renovated in 1788. The present church was opened for worship on Sunday, 21 November, 1875, at a cost of £2,700. A description of the new church which appeared in the *Irish Evangelist* of 1 January 1876 was gushing in

architectural effect has been successfully secured by means of broken masses and well proportioned general outline rather than by a redundancy of ornamental embellishments.' 'The general testimony' was that 'this church is so effective in appearance, tasteful in its appointments and perfect in all its arrangements' that 'it may be considered a

its praise. The church, we are told, was 'a very conspicuous and ornamental building'. 'It is approached by a gradual incline, and a flight of steps leading to a large open vestibule, having bold, massive columns of the finest County Down granite, the carved caps and other enrichments being of Dungannon stone.' Rather grandly, the report goes on, 'A very bold and pleasing

typical example of a complete Methodist Church'.

Over the years there have been significant additions to the property. In 1920 the present pipe-organ was installed at a cost of £1,200 as a memorial to those who had served in the First World War. The organ was originally powered by water but a change was made to electric power when electricity became available in Lisburn around 1931.

The church, which has a rear gallery, was originally designed to accommodate around 400 people but some of the pews have been removed to allow space for a Praise Group and to provide more room at the Communion Table. The interior of the building has been enhanced by the gifts of stained glass windows, a Communion Table and other furnishings.

The church stands in an elevated position, dominating the immediate area, approached not only by a fine flight of steps but also by a recently-built ramp to facilitate disabled access. The manse, which dates from about 1880, is immediately adjacent.